

because the centre of the bounding sphere 410 defines approximately the centre of the computer model of the subject object, the viewing camera 420 is positioned and orientated so that the approximate centre of the subject object will appear in the centre of an image generated by the camera.

Referring again to Figure 4, at step S4-42, the data defining the 3D computer model of the subject object generated at step S4-38 is made available for access by other apparatus via the Internet 8 in a conventional manner, together with the viewing parameters defined at step S4-40.

Alternatively, data defining the 3D computer model generated at step S4-38 and data defining the viewing parameters generated at step S4-40 may be sent from processing apparatus 6 to a customer processing apparatus 2,4, with the customer processing apparatus 2,4 then making the data available for access by other apparatus via the Internet 8 in a conventional manner.

Figure 8 shows the processing operations performed in this embodiment when the data defining the 3D computer model stored on processing apparatus 6 or a customer

processing apparatus 2,4 is sent to a third-party apparatus (not shown) so that the user of the third-party apparatus can view images of the 3D computer model.

5 Referring to Figure 8, at step S8-2, the third-party apparatus transmits a signal to the processing apparatus storing the data defining the 3D computer model (that is, processing apparatus 2, 4 or 6) requesting access to view the 3D computer model.

10 At step S8-4, the processing apparatus storing the data defining the 3D computer model logs the request from the third-party apparatus, and at step S8-6 transmits the data defining the three-dimensional computer model, or a reduced form of the data, to the third-party apparatus making the request, together with rendering instructions defining how the third-party apparatus should render the 3D computer model to generate the first image thereof. In this embodiment, the rendering instructions transmitted by image controller 46 at step S8-6 comprise the OpenGL graphics calls gluPerspective and gluLookAt previously generated by view parameter calculator 44 at step S4-40.

25 At step S8-8, the third-party apparatus stores the 3D

data and rendering instructions received from the processing apparatus 2, 4 or 6.

At step S8-10, the third-party apparatus generates and displays an image of the 3D computer model in accordance with the received rendering instructions, that is by rendering the received 3D computer model data in accordance with the received parameters defining the viewing camera. In this way, the first image generated and displayed by the third-party apparatus comprises an image of the part of the subject object which was positioned by the user of customer processing apparatus 2,4 to face the front marker 170 on the photographic mat 24. Accordingly, the user of the customer processing apparatus 2,4 has controlled the content of the first image of the 3D computer model displayed at the third-party apparatus.

At step S8-12, the third-party apparatus receives user input instructions defining changes in the position and orientation of the subject object in the 3D computer model and/or changes in the viewing parameters for the camera viewing the 3D computer model, and generates and displays image data in accordance with these instructions, in a convention manner.